International Artist's Day – 25 October (birth anniversary of Pablo Picasso)

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News

International Artist's Day is observed every year on 25 October; in 2026 it falls on a Sunday. Canadian artist Chris MacClure started the day in 2004 to honour the contribution of painters, sculptors and other artists. Pablo Picasso was born on this day (25 Oct 1881) in Málaga, Spain. It is not a UN-declared day – it is observed worldwide by art bodies.

Key facts

Date	25 October – every year (since 2004)
Founder	Chris MacClure, Canadian artist
Picasso	Born 25 Oct 1881, Málaga (Spain); died 1973, France
Cubism	Art movement developed by Picasso with Georges Braque
Guernica	1937 – protest painting on the bombing of the Basque town of Guernica in the Spanish Civil War; now in the Reina Sofía Museum, Madrid

Background

- Picasso: one of the most influential painters of the 20th century. After his 'Blue Period' and 'Rose Period' he developed 'Cubism' with Georges Braque – breaking objects into geometric shapes seen from several angles at once. 'Les Demoiselles d'Avignon' (1907) was the pioneering work.
- History: in 1937, during the Spanish Civil War, aircraft of Germany's 'Condor Legion' bombed the Basque town of Guernica. Picasso's 'Guernica', painted in protest, became a world symbol against war.
- Indian painters: Raja Ravi Varma (1848–1906) – born at Kilimanoor in the princely State of Travancore; painted Indian mythological scenes in the European oil technique and spread them to the people through his printing press. Amrita Sher-Gil (1913–1941) – a pioneer of modern Indian painting; her works are declared 'National Art Treasures'.

Tamil Nadu link: 'Thanjavur painting' – a distinctive style with gold foil, raised gesso relief and inlaid glass beads/stones; influenced by Nayak and Vijayanagara traditions; it flourished under the patronage of the Maratha rulers of Thanjavur. It holds a Geographical Indication (GI, application no. 47).

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